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**NSC BRIEFING**

**23 July 1958**

State Department review completed

**MIDDLE EAST**

**IRAQ**

I. New regime consists of core of radical nationalist army officers, with addition of civilians from former opposition, and bureaucrats who continuing to operate as before. No effective opposition has appeared against it, though middle class elements are said to be adopting "wait and see" attitude.

A. Lt. Gen. Rubai, so-called "president," is intelligent, able senior officer but is not playing dominant role.

25X1

B. Of other officers, Premier Brig. Qasim and his deputy, Col. Arif, appear as leading lights

25X1

*Nadid*  
New Finance Minister, who only learned of his appointment on radio, says Arif is much more "the military man" and more fanatic in his outlook.

C. Civilians are mixed bag; no communists but several left-wingers.

1. New minister of development, who will handle large oil revenues, is leader of Baath (Arab Socialist) party whose Syrian branch was major factor in bringing about UAR.

*D. Govt purging senior civil servants.*  
II. Regime policies so far are to try to reassure West in obvious effort to parry intervention, while at same time obtaining psychological and material support from UAR and USSR.

25X1

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- A. Statements that regime intends to abide by agreements on oil and to protect pipelines and other installations appear sincere for period until new government firmly established.

25X1

2. New Finance Minister again has said, however, that regime will seek concessions by renegotiation. Actually, Nuri govt was already building pressure in this direction.
- B. Nevertheless, new regime by initial acts has committed self to Nasir brand of neutralism.
1. In conversation with US official Hadid predicted some type of federation with UAR but that Iraq would retain considerable autonomy.
2. Treaty of alliance signed by Nasir and Arif last Saturday formalized fact that regime had already asked and obtained help from UAR.

25X1

3. Also part new neutralist look was quick request for Soviet recognition and grateful reply when Moscow promptly extended it. Premier Qasim told Moscow new govt wished "emphasize" desire that relations undergo further development. This touch may well be result possible advice from Nasir to get Soviet support quickly to bloc any Western intervention.

III. While Nasir's top priority to preserve Iraqi revolution, his agents also active in other areas.

KUWAIT

IV. Kuwait is most important target from West's immediate standpoint.

- A. Previous Iraq govt sought Kuwait's adherence Arab Union to obtain additional money.
- B. Ruler of Kuwait has been in Damascus (arrived for vacation before Iraqi coup) and has talked with Nasir, probably in hope that Nasir would protect him from new Iraqi regime. Kuwaiti popular sentiment definitely favors UAR, *although there have been no* ~~and there have been~~ street demonstrations ~~welcoming Iraqi army despite traditional Kuwaiti suspicion Iraq.~~
- C. Ground for Kuwait move into UAR has been prepared by Egyptian schoolteachers, Palestinian workers and nationalist "literary clubs" where younger Kuwaitis are developing organization leadership talents.
- D. Similar developments possible, though less likely, in Bahrein, Qatar, and Persian Gulf oil region generally.

YEMEN-ADEN

V. This area also seems likely to blossom with more fighting. British had barely begun talks with Yemenis in Ethiopia when Iraq coup burst.

25X1

25X1

LIBYA

VI. Libyan govt fears Nasir-inspired coup could come at any time. Hence British troop landings there last week to protect King Idris.

25X1

Sudan

VII. Premier Khalil is under increasing fire for strongly pro-Western line he has been pursuing.

- A. Sudanese parliament meeting today, could be occasion for Egyptian-backed attempt to unseat him. Cairo is eager to oust Khalil since he has threatened Egyptian use of Nile waters.

25X1

Egypt

IX. Nasir appears firmly in control, although he probably is a bigger hero to other Arabs than he is to Egyptians.

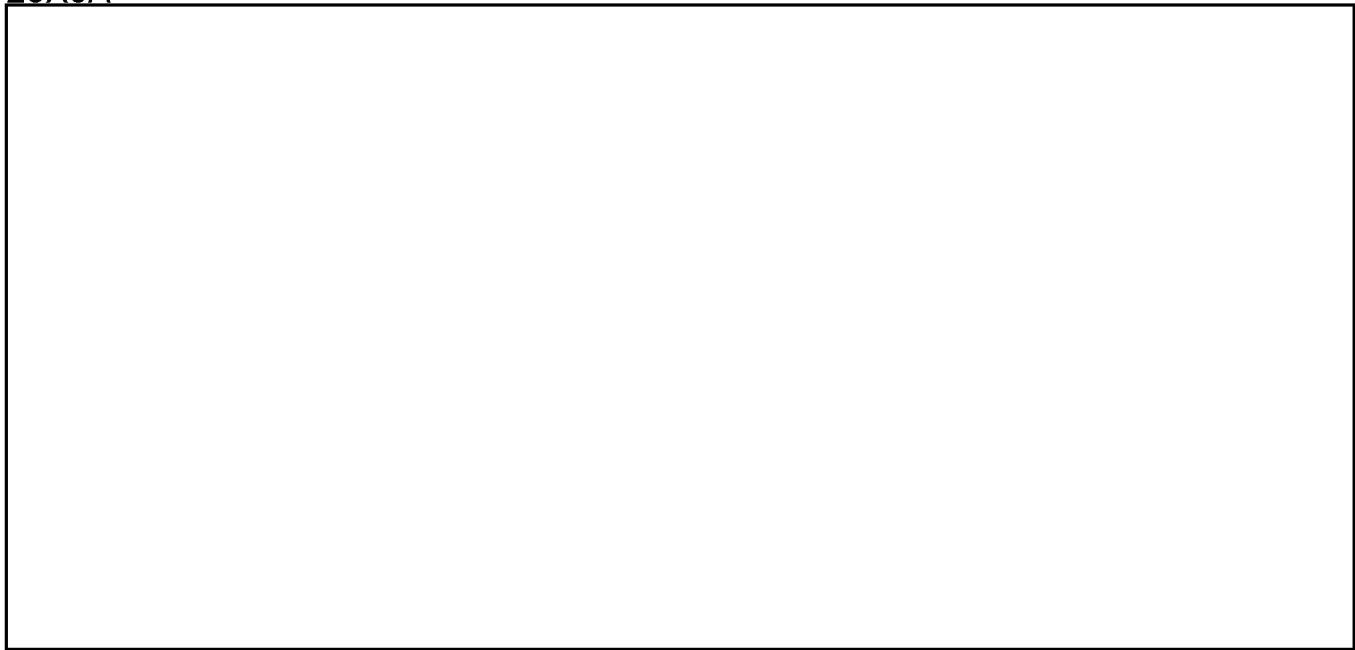
- A. His trip to Moscow, besides being grandstand play to reassure his people that they have big power support, was probably to find out what in fact Soviets were prepared to do for him.

25X1

- B. Line being put out from Cairo and other neutralist capitals, however, is that Nasir went to persuade raging beasts in Kremlin from intervening in Middle East and to let him, Nasir, handle it.
- C. Nasir regime meanwhile *taking appropriate mil prep.* ~~clearly fears possible Western action against it and is making military preparations for defense.~~
1. Once again, ships loaded with cement are reported in place in Suez Canal.
  2. ~~Popular resistance organisations in both Egypt and Syria are being mobilized.~~
  3. ~~Antiaircraft and seaward defense preparations are being hastened.~~

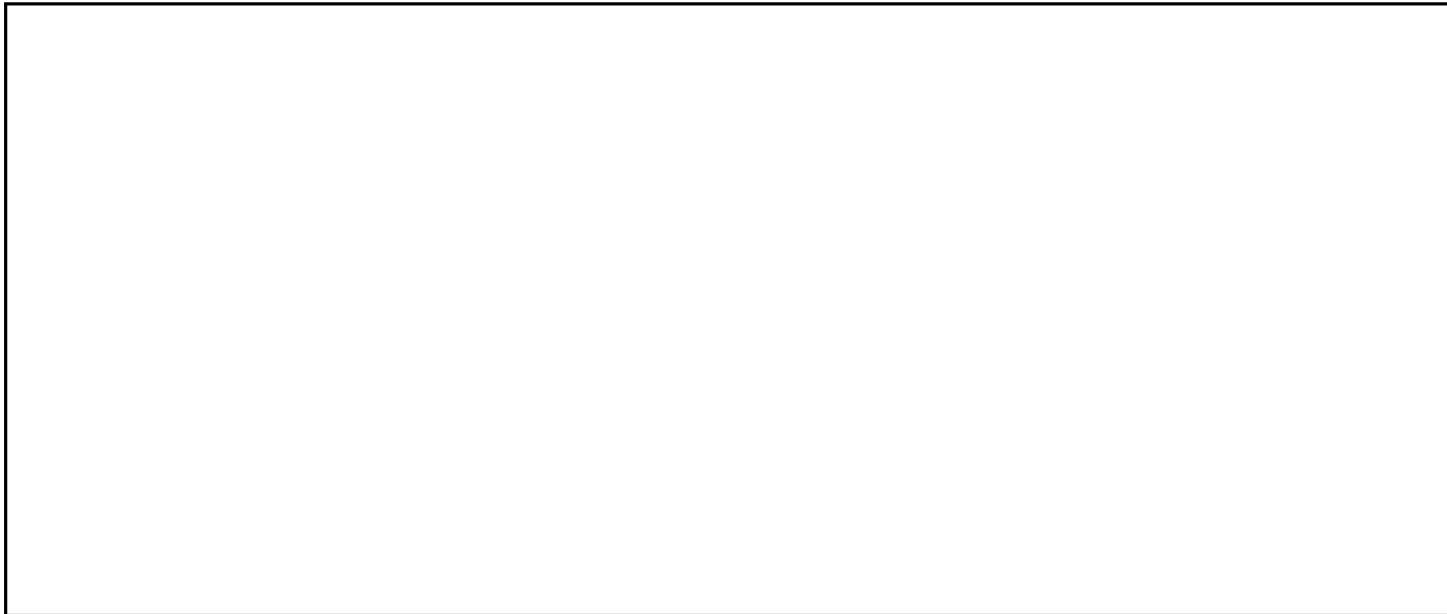
#### Baghdad Pact Countries

- X. Iraq's erstwhile Baghdad Pact partners have been insisting some kind of action against the new Iraqi regime is essential to halt the expansion of Nasirism.
- A. Turkish officials have taken bellicose line. However, the Turkish defense minister now in this country does not believe that intervention in Iraq would be feasible or productive.
- B. Iranian officials are worried particularly lest the revolutionary infection spread to Iran.



**Soviet Military Moves**

XII. While USSR has placed some of its forces in positions of readiness, it has not taken many of measures which would be considered necessary to prepare for aggressive action in Middle East or elsewhere. 25X1



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